

Dyadic perspectives on loneliness and social isolation among people with dementia and spousal carers: findings from the IDEAL programme

If a person feels lonely or isolated, does this affect their partner?

We spoke to 1,042 people with dementia and carers who were either married couples or living together as partners. We asked them about

- feeling lonely
- how much contact they had with family and friends, to see whether they were isolated
- how they felt about their relationship
- how they felt about their lives.

We found that:

- if a person with dementia or a carer feels lonely, they may feel less happy about their life
- if a carer feels lonely, this can sometimes affect how happy the person with dementia feels about their life
- if a person with dementia sees fewer people, this can sometimes make the carer feel less happy about their life

How people with dementia and carers feel about their relationship also makes a difference. If people feel closer to their partner, both they and their partner are less affected by loneliness or isolation.

If one person in a couple feels lonely or sees fewer people it can affect the other person's life, too. It is important for health and social care services to consider the experiences of both the person with dementia and the carer.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **Aging & Mental Health** journal in December 2023.